

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 of the present application have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson et al (Wilson), U.S. Patent No. 5,400,246.

In the rejection, the Examiner indicates that Wilson recites the subject matter of Claim 5 (as amended) except for "the claimed each notification appliance having a test status indicator." The Examiner further indicates that

use of system which monitor appliances having test status indicators is well known in the art, and therefore, it would have been obvious . . . to incorporate appliances having test status indicators into the system of Wilson, since Wilson would have been readily adaptable to monitor the test status of appliances in the system, which would have enhanced the overall monitoring capabilities in the system of Wilson.

The Wilson system monitors various input sensors such as smoke detectors, temperature sensors and 2-wire loops which detect open doors and windows. It also controls operation of various alarms, bells and sirens. Wilson further discloses monitoring and control of various household appliances. However, regardless of exactly which type of equipment is used, Wilson is primarily concerned with centrally monitoring and controlling the equipment, not testing it. It is also important to note that Wilson does not disclose or suggest a notification appliance having any type of test status indicator local to the appliance itself.

The Examiner indicates that incorporating appliances having test status indicators into Wilson's system would be obvious since Wilson could have been adapted to monitor the test status of appliances. However, Wilson at most teaches centralized monitoring. In contrast, the present invention of Claim 5 relates to an alarm system in which the normal operation of notification appliances can be tested by causing a test status indicator at each notification appliance to be operated for subsequent verification by a technician or operator and without operating its associated alarm indicator so as to avoid disrupting the building occupants. Such verification can include, for example, checking that the programming of alarm indicators is correct or troubleshooting a faulty notification appliance. Further, the test status indicator of the present invention is not at a system controller but rather is at the appliance itself to be used to aid a technician during testing and verification of a system. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended to more clearly indicate the respective functions of the test status indicator and the alarm indicator and to indicate that a test status indicator is operated "for verification." Since Wilson does not teach or suggest such verification testing, Claim 5 as amended is believed to be patentable over

Wilson. These remarks apply also to base method Claim 1 (as amended).

Base Claims 14 and 17 are directed to a test mode which uses a locally-activated switch at a notification appliance. By providing a magnetic or other locally-activated switch in each notification appliance, a technician can activate one appliance at a time, rather than, as has been the convention, causing all of the appliances on a notification circuit to operate while the technician walks through the building to check that all of the appliances are functioning.

As with the test status indicator noted above, the test switch of the present invention of base Claims 14 and 17 is not at the system controller but rather is at the appliance itself for use by a technician during system testing and verification. The Examiner has not cited any portion of Wilson that teaches or suggests a test switch located at a notification appliance. Therefore, base Claims 14 and 17 are believed to be patentable over Wilson.

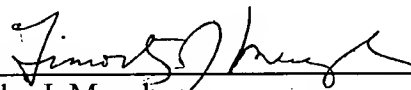
Applicants believe that the claims as amended are not taught or suggested by Wilson and respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of the claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (781) 861-6240.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 10/8/99